

**Commission on the Environment  
Comments on the Creation of a  
Refuse and Recycling Commission  
September 11, 2007**

The Commission on the Environment would like to submit as part of the public record to the Mayor and Council the following comments on the recommended ordinance to amend Chapter 20 of the City Code:

1. The Commission would like consideration for the adoption of language (under section 20-63 items 1,2,3,4 & 5) that would specifically call upon the newly created commission “to coordinate and to acquire input from the Environment Commission” prior to submitting reports, studies, and outreach materials of an environmental nature to the Mayor and Council. We believe the domain of financial matters as related to the City’s Refuse and Recycling Program should fall within the purview of the proposed commission to act without coordination with the Environment Commission. However, it appears that most of the business of the proposed commission is of an environmental nature, and we feel strongly that on matters of technology and the environment it would be remiss of the City not to require the proposed commission to gain the expertise of the Environment Commission, since this subject area falls within the original charter of the Environment Commission.
2. For an alternative to the above recommendation, the Commission believes that the creation of a new commission may not be the most effective way to handle the very near-term issues surrounding the implementation of new and improved processes for refuse and recycling in the City. Therefore, in lieu of this ordinance amendment, the Commission would like consideration of the creation of a multi-year citizen task force to provide valuable input to the Mayor and Council. There are several reasons for this recommendation:
  - a. The Refuse and Recycling Program is a single, focused topic that may not warrant the on-going resources that it takes to operate a commission. Over time its value to the City may diminish as other pressing matters take over the attention of the Mayor and Council.
  - b. We do acknowledge that it is probably a multi-year topic and just like RORZOR and other task force issues such as the stormwater utility fee can span several years, but would have a sunset date to motivate all parties to put outstanding issues to rest.
  - c. A task force can be populated with citizens as well as existing Board and Commission representatives. In this case, such liaison is warranted where the Environment Commission, the Planning Commission, and other Boards and Commissions could be regular participants. This approach would bring all relevant parties to the table and facilitate the operation and implementation of the work output of the task force.
  - d. We believe this approach is consistent with government efficiency and fiscal responsibility principles and would serve to amplify rather than duplicate a subset of activities already falling within the purview of an existing Commission.

We appreciate the Mayor and Council’s consideration of these recommendations.